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HOW WE CARRY ON 4-H CLUB WORK IN ILLINOIS

A radio talk by Miss Cleo Fitzsimmons, Extension Specialist in Junior Club Work, Urbana, Illinois, delivered in the National 4-H club radio program, Saturday, February 4, 1933, broadcast by a network of 57 associate NBC radio stations.

In this time of reduced incomes, 4-H club boys and girls in Illinois are finding greater challenge and opportunity for helping themselves and their families through 4-H club work by making the best use of resources at hand. 4-H club work teaches by doing. Club boys and girls learn by working at tasks that are waiting to be done in every home and on every farm.

Membership in 4-H clubs is open without reservation to any rural boy or girl within the age limits of 10 to 20 years inclusive. The aim of club work is to meet individual needs, to aid in meeting needs of the club member's family, and indirectly to deal with community needs. This year 11,700 Illinois boys and 11,980 Illinois girls are enrolled with this purpose in mind. 4-H club work is carried on in every county in the State.

Responsibility for each individual club rests with the members themselves and the community. The University of Illinois Extension staff of specialists helps the clubs with special information. County farm and home advisers give assistance with the organization and management of 4-H clubs. Adult leaders for the club come from the community. They are men and women who understand the problems of their communities and are interested in the problems of boys and girls. They serve without pay. These leaders present to the club members a number of possible solutions for their problems.

They also help club members to make plans for their club meetings. These plans made at the beginning of the club season in May or June, are carried out in a businesslike manner, from the election of officers to giving instructions in carrying on the project and the final report of the season's work. Reports or summaries are made by every club, usually in the month of August, and copies are forwarded to the State office.

After a club has been formed it may choose the project which its members wish to carry. In home-economics work the girls choose clothing, foods, or room-improvement projects. For every girl the problem presented by a project is different. Each girl must analyze her own problem. From information made available by the local leader and the county extension agent, the girl chooses the method that offers the best solution for her own particular problem.

During the last few years, analysis of the amount of money that a farm family may spend has become more important. Through keeping a clothing account, the girl knows how much she has spent and compares that amount with the total family expenditure for clothing. When she finds that her expenditures have been too high, she makes more of her own clothing. By careful planning, she learns to look well on her share of the family's clothing fund.

In doing work with foods, the 4-H girl's own family is the basis of her

problem. She plans, prepares and serves meals that measure up to the requirements for adequate nourishment. She learns these requirements in 4-H club work. She plans and follows a canning budget based upon the needs of the family. She bakes raised bread, quick breads, cookies, and cakes.

Each girl's home furnishes the problem for the work in her room improvement project. Usually she directs her attention to making her own room more attractive and livable.

In agricultural clubs, the boys study problems in stock breeding and crop production and immediately apply the information gained on the home farm. Last year the volume of work done in the boys' clubs in Illinois represented a considerable business. The total value of this business was \$546,272. Its profit was \$181,262, a creditable attainment in any business.

In every 4-H endeavor, club members through judging their own work and, later, the work of other club members, learn to recognize a good product. Girls and boys who are themselves successful in adopting recommended practices in agriculture or in home making demonstrate these practices to their clubs and communities.

At tours and exhibits they show and compare 4-H products. Through these comparisons, they set up standards of achievement. By these standards, club members measure their own work and plan for its improvement.

4-H work often molds the life purposes of members. Among club boys, prizes won at exhibits form the beginning of a college fund, or, together with profits from the project they lay the foundation for better work in succeeding years. One girl reported as follows: "The prizes I've won on my dress are the start of my 'go-to-college' fund." Another one said: "From my club experience I have learned how interesting the planning and preparing of meals can be." These are typical comments found in stories of the experiences of 4-H club girls.

With worthy achievements to strengthen their confidence and purpose, these farm boys and girls are facing with courage the problems that today confront farm homes and communities.